

School Business Alert

November 2008

Audit Report Filing Going Paperless

Your auditor has been provided the following information. One copy of the audit report should be filed with the Department of Education immediately upon completion of the audit, by email attachment in PDF format, to ED.Audit@iowa.gov. Please do not send paper copies of audits. All audits are to be filed by March 31 unless an extension has been approved by the Office of the Auditor of State prior to March 31, 2009.

Team Members Attend Data Conference

Su McCurdy and Janice Evans attended the Summer Data Conference provided by the National Center for Education Statistics. The conference is the training opportunity for staff who complete the federal fiscal, student, and staffing reports, and for those who work with the handbooks such as the Financial Accounting Handbook (Uniform Financial Accounting). Su and Janice have been invited to review an NCES Forum publication to be released later this year. The publication addresses issues related to disaster recovery and tracking displaced students.

We were notified that the OMB clearance process has begun for the federal 2007-2008 Teacher Compensation Survey. The notice was published in the October 2, 2008 Federal Register. A 3-year clearance was requested, and there are no new data items for the collection. We were also notified that there will be no changes to the F-33 (Census) data collection form for 2007-2008. We have not been notified on the 2007-2008 NPEFS data collection at this time. Typically that notice is not provided until January or February in the year due. All three data collections are due on March 15, 2009, and are filed by the Department of Education.

SBRC Meeting Postponed

The next regular meeting of the SBRC, normally scheduled for December 8, 2008, has been postponed until Monday, January 12, 2009. Districts that have made requests for hearings have been notified.

Several agenda items have been moved to a different SBRC meeting from the meeting where they were handled in the past. For example, the SBRC application data collection will be handled at the March meeting instead of December. The filing deadline was changed in law last session so that districts could finalize their certified enrollment number prior to determining if they had increased enrollment or open enrollment out students not on the previous year's count. Special education balances and requests for modified allowable growth will also be handled at the March meeting in order to accommodate the processing time for the SES to be filed and edited. The Harkin Grant awards will also be an agenda item for the March meeting.

For those districts that are requesting modified allowable growth for a negative special education balance or are requesting modified allowable growth on the SBRC application data collection, it is not necessary to complete a request for a hearing on the DE website. Those items are class actions and do not require separate hearings by district. Several districts that have limited English proficiency requests on the SBRC application data collection may be required to appear. If a district is selected for an appearance, it will be notified prior to the March meeting.

SBRC Application

The SBRC Application on the secure EdInfo website is the means by which districts may request modified allowable growth for three things: an increase in enrollment; open enroll out students in the current year that were not on the

previous year's certified enrollment count; and for the excess costs of a limited English proficient (LEP) program. Remember to click the "Update" button on the Application to save any information put into the form. Districts will find the information on how the form calculates in the unnumbered, descriptor column. Please note that districts need to fill in lines 18, 19 and 20 and click the update button in order for the request to be completed. The local board of education needs to approve the request, but the minutes do not need to be sent to the Department of Education. The due date for the SBRC Application was changed to December 1, instead of November 1, as in the past. Pushing the date back a month will allow districts to complete all the revisions to their Certified Enrollment forms prior to submitting the SBRC Application. The SBRC will consider the applications at the regular meeting in March 2009 rather than in December as in the past. If you have any questions, please contact Joyce Thomsen at 515-242-5612 or email joyce.thomsen@iowa.gov.

Certified Enrollment Update

All amendments received to date have been entered, and the editing has begun. If there is a question on some entry on the certified enrollment, the district will be contacted by email. The adjustments for regional academies on form 12 and the adjustments for operational function sharing on form 12A will be entered during November. If a district did not show a savings in administrative and overhead expenditures on its CAR-COA, Joyce Thomsen will contact those districts to discuss the situation. A savings in expenditures and an increase in student opportunities are required for continued supplementary weighting.

The first run of edits looked very good. A few districts appear to have entered students on certified enrollment who are not eligible to be counted: for example, students in correctional institutions, at ISD, IBSSS, ISTS, or IJH. PSEO is not eligible for supplementary weighting, so should not be on form 12. All ICN courses would be entered in the top portion of form 12, even if offered by a community college. If your district entered any ICN classes offered by the community college in the bottom portion of form 12, or

include PSEO, or counted ineligible students, send Su an amendment by November 20th.

Operational Function Sharing

DE personnel have received calls asking if a district must share more than one operational function to qualify for the supplementary weighting. The answer is no, the districts do not need to share more than one position. For questions on operational function sharing, please call Joyce Thomsen at 515-242-5612 or email joyce.thomsen@iowa.gov.

School Board Officers

If your district has not yet updated its School Board Officers application, please do so. It was due November 1. Things to watch for – complete phone numbers, email addresses, updating term end dates to either 2009 or 2011, having an odd number of board members, and indicating a CFO/Business Manager in addition to the Board Secretary and Treasurer. If you have any questions, please contact Denise Ragias at 515-281-4600 or email denise.ragias@iowa.gov.

Mentoring & Induction

The first semester Mentoring and Induction data collection is due on November 15, 2009. If you have any questions, please contact Denise Ragias at 515-281-4600 or email denise.ragias@iowa.gov.

Harkin Grant

Applications are now being taken as part of the Harkin Grant (Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program, [Fire Safety and Construction]). The grants, to be awarded on a competitive basis, are available to Iowa public school districts. Applications must be postmarked or received at the Iowa Department of Education by 4:30 p.m., December 15, 2008, for both the Fire Safety and Construction Grant Applications. More information is available on the web at <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/1542/1699/> or contact Gary.Schwartz@iowa.gov.

